

ST. VINCENT'S CENTER

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June 2, 2008

Chairman Kevin J. Martin
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Sir:

On behalf of St. Vincent's Center, I am writing to express our appreciation of CBS Radio Baltimore's on-going efforts to support the children in our care. We look forward to CBS Radio Baltimore's continued support through the upcoming years.

As you may know, St. Vincent's Center is a large therapeutic residential program in Timonium, Maryland. At any given time, we have 70 or more children residing here. The children can range in age from 3 to 13 years old. Almost all of the children of St. Vincent's Center have suffered terrible abuses for most of their young lives. Most have been severely physically and emotionally abused. Most have suffered severe neglect and poverty. And most are being treated for sexual abuse issues also. Life has been very difficult and unfair to them. Most of these children have witnessed and experienced extreme violence and cruelty.

Most of these boys and girls have also suffered multiple foster-care placement failures prior to being admitted to St. Vincent's Center. Currently, the average number of foster care placement failures for each child prior to being admitted to SVC, number six to a dozen foster homes. These foster families, meaning well, welcome the child into their home, telling them, "Here is your new grandmother, etc....", and then after a few months, or weeks, the family realizes that they are not equipped to deal with the child's serious emotional issues and behaviors.

So the child once again feels rejected, and then it is on to the next family, and the next, until at last the child is brought to St. Vincent's Center. When they come to us they are suffering from separation anxiety and they are grieving the loss of family. They have missed out on most of the fun, carefree times that most other children can take for granted.

These special boys and girls often feel that they do not deserve a family or any nice things in their lives. They often believe that they are "bad" people and that they are not worthy of love and care. It is not unusual to find that these children do not believe that they are capable of doing good things or having good things happen to them now, or in the future.



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At St. Vincent's Center we try to help these children to feel safe. We try to help them learn that the abuse that they have suffered and survived was not their fault. We tell them that we understand their anger, fear, and sadness, and that they have a right to their feelings. We strive to teach them that there are good ways to get these bad feelings out without hurting others or themselves. We let them know that we believe in them and their ability to make positive choices and changes to improve their lives.

We also try very hard to rescue and restore as much "normal" childhood joy, magic, and wonder as we can. We could not do this without the help from caring hearts in the community. As a non-profit agency, we rely heavily on our wonderful volunteers and donors to help us provide these children with all of the extras - such as fun times, special attention, and wonderful experiences.

The counselors and therapists here have heard children disclose their horror stories of the true-life nightmares that they have survived. That is why the kindness that people in the community show to these special boys and girls means so much, not only to the children, but to the staff here as well. We all cherish the times when the children are able to forget their troubles for awhile and smile like other children who have not had to live through such hardships.

The children love it when caring people like the folks of CBS Radio Baltimore reach out to St. Vincent's Center to make positive differences. It is very healing for them to know that there are grown-ups in this world who care for them and want to help them to believe in themselves and enjoy themselves. We need good dedicated individuals to band together to use the light of their spirits to confront the darkness of child abuse.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cyndi Mitchell-Summers', followed by a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Cyndi Mitchell-Summers
Director of Volunteer Services
St. Vincent's Center & Chara House
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